

**QUESTION:** Muslims affirm that '*la ilaha ill Allah.*' What is the correct translation of this in English, because we see Muslims and non-Muslims translating it in many different ways?

**ANSWER:** The correct translation is:  
There is none worthy of worship except Allah.

However we see very commonly in the books, on posters, on the TV or in the newspapers that it is translated as: There is no god except Allah.

This second translation (there is no god except Allah) is incorrect.

A god or deity is ANYTHING that is worshipped – and there are many things which are worshipped other than Allah. For example, the hindu gods like Ganesh, Brahma, etc; Jesus is worshipped by the Christians, etc; the Parsees in Iran worship Fire, which is their god, and so on.

So *la ilaaha ill Allah* is explained using another Arabic phrase:  
*La ma'booda bi haqqin ill Allah.*

To break this sentence down.....  
*La ma'booda* (there is no object of worship)  
*bi haqq* (which DESERVES to be worshipped)  
*ill Allah* (except Allah).

- meaning: there is nothing taken as a god by the people which actually deserves to be worshipped except Allah.

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QUESTION: The phrase '*la ilaha ill Allah*' has been divided into 2 parts by the scholars of the past: an affirmation and a negation. What does this actually mean? <sup>1</sup>

ANSWER: This phrase, known in Arabic as the *shahadah*, can be divided into two parts.

An NEGATION (*la ilaha* – there is none who deserves to be worshipped).

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to '*aqeedah ut tawheed* p51 of Shaykh Saalih al Fawzaan for more information

So here we negate and deny that anyone or anything has the right to have any worship given to them...

.....'ill Allah' - except for Allah alone. So this is the AFFIRMATION part of the shahadah; we affirm that Allah has the right to be worshipped.

So the *shahadah* consists of a negation followed by an affirmation.

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## **NEXT TIME:**

Continuing on the topic of different translations of '*la ilaha ill Allah*', we see the following translations very commonly amongst the Muslims in books and articles today. Are they correct or not?

- 1) there is no one who is worshipped except Allah
- 2) there is no Creator except Allah
- 3) none has the right to make judgement (*haakimiyah*) except for Allah